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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

SWAMI MUKTANANDA

Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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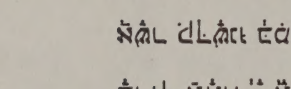
What Path Are You On?

SPIRITUAL PEOPLE TODAY are exploring an astonishing variety of paths. In what is coming to seem to be our century's most characteristic fashion, they ransack history and geography for answers, then synthesize these answers with the insights of modern-day gurus, psychologists, and philosophers, and finally join with those of like minds to live by their new-found beliefs in the midst of this addled and rattled world so scarily threatened by nuclear insanity . . . . If they do not follow paths that take them to such faraway places as India or Japan *(see last month's issue on the subject of "The Unchurched")*, they tend to turn to saints and sages with teachings from times even more distant. In our editorial office, following the example of a Hollywood yogi we heard about, we have begun to put up around the molding all the photographs we have used of men and women we have written about on account of their holiness, their wisdom, and their appeal to others. Glancing up from my typewriter, I see Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, Mother Teresa, Mary Baker Eddy, Peace Pilgrim, Confucius, Swami Yogananda, Sri Aurobindo, Daniel Berrigan, Thomas Merton, Gandhi, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Buddha, the Dali Lama, Meher Baba, Sai Baba, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Swami Muktananda, whose portrait forms our holiday cover (there *is* something of the Far Eastern Santa Claus about his face), will join them, as will Blaise Pascal and any other Christian with a message pertinacious enough to exert an attraction today. — P.G.

The Lights of Hanukkah

by EMILY SOLIS-COHEN JR



WHEN the question was asked: "What is Hanukkah?" the rabbis answered with the story of the one unpolluted cruse which contained but enough oil for one day's burning and yet, miraculously, sufficed for eight. We may know more history than those rabbis did, but we cannot get any closer to the real miracle of Hanukkah than they, when they told this symbolic story. For, at the time when the Temple was rededicated, the future of Judaism still appeared insecure. No one could have foreseen that the faith of this little people would soon affect the religions of the pagan world, and survive for many centuries. The miracle of the oil is but another way of stressing the miracle of Judaism and its continuance.

More than twenty-one centuries have elapsed since Syro-Grecian and Hasmonean clashed in battle. It cannot be said that Jewish life has been easy since that critical moment. The attitude that demands uniformity of religion and culture as indispensable to the unity of the State did not vanish with Antiochus. On the contrary, he has had many successors. The troubles of Judaism in our day, though apparently different, are in reality traceable to the same conception of society. Mental and spiritual uniformity is the cry of all little souls, whose aim is to remake the world in their own image. Against that point of view the Maccabees struggled, and it may legitimately be argued that their example inspired similar steadfastness in many succeeding generations, both of Jews and of non-Jews. The fight against spiritual regimentation, begun by them, has been continued by the Jewish minority wherever it has lived. That is the universal element in the Hanukkah story, and it needs emphasis today as much as at any time in the past.

But it is not only as a call to resistance that the story has served as a source of inspiration to the Jewish people. The purity of the Jewish faith has always been connected with the need for sacrifice, and since the days of the Maccabees such sacrifice evokes their memory, and the memory of the men and women of their generation.

Hellenists there were among the Jews of that day. Would they have been more numerous, and would the Jews as a whole have adopted a greater measure of Greek culture had not Antiochus attempted to force it upon them? Perhaps so; especially as to philosophy and science. Judaism has not been unreceptive to noble thought, from whatever source. Greek Alexandria indicates the possibility of mutual and harmonious influence. A millenium later, we behold Judaic teachers discussing Aristotle and Ptolemy with a respect equal to that accorded Rab and Samuel. But that was — a millenium later. "In the days of Mattathias . . . the Hasmonean, and his sons," Jews saw only "the wicked Kingdom of Javan arising to destroy" their cherished religion; the attempt of a tyrant to impose upon them laws, beliefs, customs, and ceremonial rites inferior to their own. To conform would have been easier than to resist; but they preferred to resist, and to remain loyal to what they held to be nobler and better. So Mattathias is reported as saying:

"Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him, and fall away every one from the religion of his fathers . . . we will not hearken to the king's words, to go from our religion either to the right hand or to the left."

So, also, subsequent generations found in the rites of Hanukkah a ceremonial symbolizing their own problems, and inspiring them to like loyalties. This is the real significance for history of the events of that day.

Thus it becomes clear that in Jewish life the outstanding element of Hanukkah is not the victory of arms, nor the national glory and power won by subsequent Hasmonean conquests. The meaning of the festival is spiritual, not martial. True, it emphasizes Jewish solidarity, but that is a solidarity of sacrifice and devotion. Significantly, the *Haftarah* chosen for the Sabbath of Hanukkah — a choice preserved by both the Sephardic and Ashkenazic rituals — is not a chapter from the historical books telling of a national victory, nor one from the Prophets foretelling the ultimate triumph of Judaism, but one which speaks of the sins of the high priest, of the inadequate, if desirable material hopes of the lay ruler, and sounds its keynote in that famous phrase of the faith by which Judaism has survived: "Not by strength and not by might, but by My Spirit," said the Lord of Hosts.

For centuries, the feast of dedication has been celebrated in the Jewish home and in the synagogue. Each generation has drawn from it renewed inspiration for meeting its own peculiar problems. If in this, our own day, there is lack of unanimity as to the message brought by the Hanukkah lights, the differences are on the surface. The fundamental message remains the same — so long as Jews are sincere and loyal, the light of Judaism will not grow dim.

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A Faraway Christmas

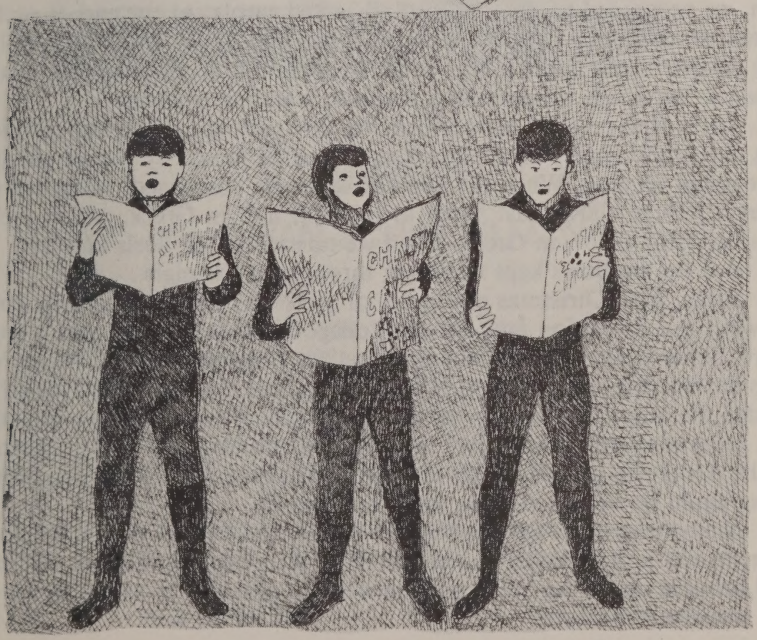
by JIM PANOS

THE YEAR, 1932.

I was a boarder in a boys' school near Athens. There were about a hundred boys living in at the time, mostly Greek, some from other countries in Europe, a few, like myself, from America. The school, Athens College, was an experiment in international education, sponsored by Greek and American interests for boys with a Greek background. It was not strictly a college; it was basically a high school, extended by a year or two at either end. It offered the rigorous curriculum of the European *gymnasium*, rendered even more so by its bilingual character.

Despite the rigors of our academic endeavors, there were times when we, as boys, were boys, and, as boys, were developing a normal interest in girls. So, when the rumor spread, with the speed of lightning, that the leading girls' school of Greece, the Arsakeion, was planning to build a facility on several hundred acres of land adjoining the Athens College campus, the prospect hardly caused us consternation.

The rumor of the girls' school was happily confirmed. Ground was broken, construction started. The building promised to be a large one — one, we estimated, which might house a few hundred Greek maidens. But, as it neared completion, a devastating signal was sent our way. The erection of a concrete wall to contain the entire property of the Arsakeion was begun. As



the wall rose, our aspirations plummeted. When it was completed — at the forbidding height of two meters, topped off with ugly pieces of broken glass planted firmly in the cement — we despaired. When the school opened, it became painfully clear that we would have to content ourselves with long, wistful glances in its direction, aided, but not abetted, by the use of binoculars. As it turned out, there was no communication whatsoever between Athens College and the Arsakeion. It might as well not have been there at all.

It was, then, a welcome surprise when those of us in the choral group rehearsing for the annual Christmas carol recital were told that we had been invited to sing at the Arsakeion one night in the week before Christmas. Oh, joy! We were the envy of every other boy in the school. And, oh, boy! Did we rehearse those carols! We even threw in the traditional Greek *kalanta* with our otherwise English repertoire in honor of our hosts.

On the appointed evening, we bathed, scrubbed, polished our boots to a mirror shine, and cleaned our uniforms with great quantities of benzine. We fairly sparkled. We skirted the hostile wall to the gate of the Arsakeion with swallows fluttering in our chests.

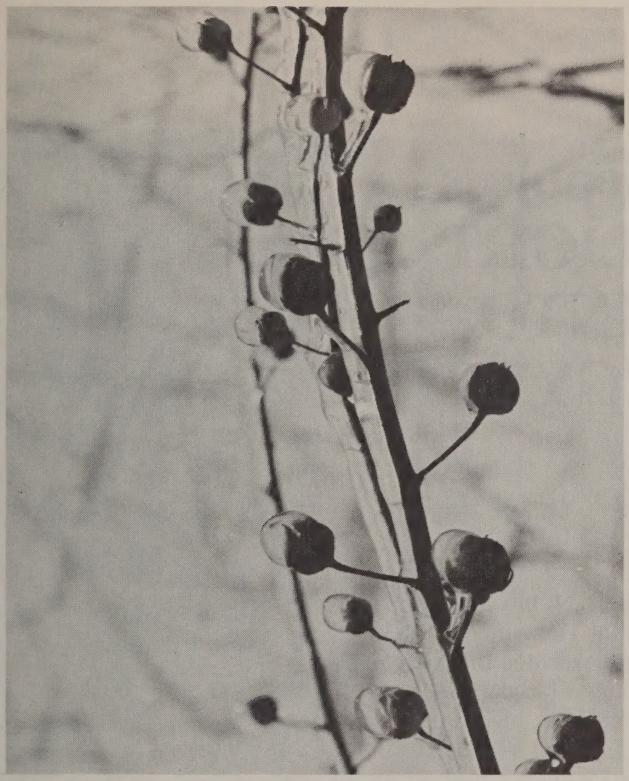
The school's entire faculty of starched matrons greeted us at the entrance and ushered us into the hall where we were to sing. I remember that hall as being considerably larger than Grand Central Station. A long string of girls, in black and white uniforms, was ranged, standing, in a perfect semi-circle at the far, far end. We were herded into the center of that lovely crescent — at the respectable distance of some fifteen meters. In this spacious configuration, we proceeded to sing our well-rehearsed carols. At the end of each one — and at an unseen signal — the girls broke into polite, measured applause. The concert lasted about a half hour. We wound it up, strategically, with the *kalanta*, for which we received a veritable standing ovation.

Then, with no shift in positions, we were treated to milk and cookies, as was our gentle quarry on the horizon, the twain joined by furtive glances of unrequited longing. When the goodies had been consumed, we called out a hearty "Merry Christmas!" half in English, half in Greek, which the girls returned with ardor, in Greek. Then we turned on our heels and left.

But the swallows kept fluttering throughout the night.

Sadly, that Christmas encounter of 1932 was the one and only contact between the Arsakeion and Athens College in all the years I was a student there. Never again were we invited to sing our Christmas carols. We could not help but wonder about that. Had our singing been that bad? Had the girls exceeded the limits of decorum, in the strict code of the times, by applauding our *kalanta* so enthusiastically? We settled for the latter. The administration of the Arsakeion had obviously decided that the morals of their wards should never again be subjected to so much temptation.

Nevertheless, for us, the boys in the Athens College choral group that year, it was a memorable Christmas. For, as in ancient Jericho, our carols had brought down the hated wall between us and the Arsakeion for a brief but wondrous moment.



Creation

by SUSAN SCHINDELMAN

You berries be, you weed and pod,
Contract and curl; extend, lift, sweep —

Be filament, be flax and flesh,
And here divide:
Sky, silt and sod.

Soft shell where salt and water mesh,
Be winged, walk, crawl, sail, or sleep:

And yet be God.

Tiepolo's FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

MOSCHINI has told a story that Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo designed and executed the twenty-seven etchings of the *Flight into Egypt* to vindicate his originality as an artist, which — due to his father's predominance in the 18th century Venetian school — had been impugned. For Giandomenico to suffer the iniquities without repudiating the implications was not within the fabric of his artistic temperament.

Giandomenico Tiepolo, born in 1727, was one of those creative spirits in whom the forces of art are so abundant and glorious that they overflow and invest whatever they accomplish with the virtue of their own vitality. Giandomenico accepted the challenge and set out to efface the doubt and create by dint of superb artistry that masterpiece : *Idee pittoresche*

(continued on page 13)

sopra la Fugga in Egitto.

In 1750, his father, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, had been commissioned to decorate the Residenz of Karl Philipp von Grieffenklau, Prince Bishop of Wurzburg. Giandomenico, already a consummate artist in his own right, accompanied his father as chief assistant in the painting of a decorative cycle of allegorical frescoes for the Residenz.

By 1753, the *Flight into Egypt* was completed, published and dedicated to his father's patron, the Prince Bishop. By doing so, Giandomenico dismissed all innuendoes, substantiated his artistic talents and demonstrated his ability to reproduce twenty-seven pictures with identical subject matter and without repetition.

ALTHOUGH only six of the series have been selected to represent the dramatic event in Christ's infancy, they are self-explanatory. The redundancy of captions has been avoided for no other reason than to pay tribute to the artist's intentions and the viewers' imagination. It is sufficient to experience the genuine, personal and emotive contribution of Giandomenico's awareness of reality and the aesthetic dignity given to the tribulations of the Holy Family. He has intimated a sense of his own personality and vision into the engravings which aim and pierce with supreme knowledge, truthful and realistic story-telling.

— J.S.D.G.

The Mystical Illumin

by J.S.D. GLAUS

THE NAME of Blaise Pascal immediately conjures up, and rightfully so, consummate genius in all its connotations. Unlike the majority which populates the earth, Pascal's inquiring mind never forfeited the opportunity of investigation. At an age when most children are subdued by tranquil domesticity, Pascal's natural curiosity, at the age of seven, could only be focused on the complexities of scientific thought. By the age of sixteen he presented to the Academie des Sciences, a treatise on geometry, which was admired by Descartes and thoroughly delighted Liebnitz. How easy the subject had appeared to him. He approached the other sciences and the languages of antiquity with the same facile erudition. However, by the age of thirty-one, his life had assumed the monotony of quiet desperation.

Pascal had arrived at this state of being after his inquiries into the meaning of existence which had been provoked by the paradox of human nature. A paradox which philosophers recognize but never resolve. Blaise was aware that man was a mass of contradictions, and that man's nature was naturally ambivalent. His vast research had shown him that there were many schools of thought concerning the nature of man. There were those which believed that man was incorruptible and others which believed that he was irretrievable. While some knew of the excellence of man, they were blind to his corruption. While others recognized the infirmity of man's nature, they were unaware of his dignity. If man attempted to avoid vanity, he fell into despair.

Quiet desperation. So awful in its meaning, so emphatic in its finality. Such was Pascal's mood. He realized that he alone was not capable of understanding the world in which he lived.

So he found himself on the night of November 23, 1654. Alone with the darkness of his own soul and the utter wretchedness of his own being, Pascal turned to his sole source of inspiration, the Bible. That night he turned specifically to chapter seventeen of the Gospel of Saint John, where Jesus is preparing for the crucifixion. Having read the passage countless times, Pascal quietly resolved to end the struggle and relinquish any pretense of finding God through any power of his own. Quietly he prayed, patiently he waited. Then, suddenly, a brilliant and intense light illuminated the obscurity, flooding every corner of the room with the very light of the flaming bush that burned and did not burn out. At the precise moment when Pascal most needed to feel the presence of God, God not only let his presence be felt but responded with a divine message. *(See The Memorial on page 17)*

Blaise Pascal was born at Clermont in the Auvergne on June 19, 1623. His father, Etienne Pascal, was a fine gentleman and a good Christian. Although a good practicing Catholic, he was not imbued with any mystical inclinations. His interests lay elsewhere, specifically in the sciences — tastes

ation of Blaise Pascal

which Blaise inherited to a superlative degree. Until the age of twenty-three, Pascal had displayed no particular interest in religion. However, at this age his religious consciousness was thoroughly awakened. Introduced fortuitously to Jansenism, a doctrine initiated by Cornelius Jansen in a vast opus entitled *Augustinius*, Pascal enthusiastically espoused the ideas that man alone is futile and helpless and that his physical weaknesses are symbolic of his spiritual debility. He began to depreciate the kind of knowledge that man may reach through his own efforts, and to thirst for a knowledge that came from God. To Pascal, there could be no compromise between the life of the spirit and that of the world. His approach to understanding the relationship existing between God and man was that man's true end is to participate in the divine life and the pursuit of perfection. Recognizing an excellence superior to that intellectual excellence he had previously known and cultivated, he henceforth dedicated himself wholly — body, mind, and spirit — to God.

However, Pascal continued to strike acquaintance with the human side of his nature. His intellectual curiosity could not be stayed. His inquiries were unlimited and did not discriminate in exploring the writings of Montaigne, Charron, and Descartes. He absorbed with perspicacity their views on the capabilities and limitations of the human mind and will, which added depth to his vision. Ever so gradually does the mind of man convince him that he is capable of anything, and ever so insidiously does the mind of man exclude the power of God. So it was with Pascal — that he became obsessed with greatness on the one hand and his utter wretchedness on the other.

Reduced to a state of spiritual paralysis, Pascal acknowledged that he had reached a spiritual and intellectual impasse. He had suddenly realized that it was impossible to reconcile the pursuit of intellectual rationale and the understanding of God's will. Although he confessed an aversion for the things of the world, he also felt that God had abandoned him. Grace had not been granted to him, because in his mind he felt that he was an unworthy recipient of it. He realized he must surrender. Finally, so impotent was his mind to find God, so barren was his perspective, so empty was his soul, so aimless was his life in its pursuits, he created a state of will predisposed to God so that when God was ready, he would be ready to receive His grace.

Then, on that cold November night, the mystical experience occurred which was to bring about Pascal's spiritual release. The experience not only provided him with an avenue to God's grace, but the inspiration of God's presence never left him.

Pascal now shed all intellectual pride and gave himself entirely to his new found spiritual conviction. He retired to Port-Royal-des-Champs, a Cistercian monastery which was used by a number of *solitaires* — men of distinction and genteel nobility — who wished to live in seclusion for the purpose of preparing themselves for the world to come without embracing the monastic rites.

If, up until this moment, Pascal had been known primarily as a man of intellect and science, he was now to brandish a flaming pen of vindication against the Jesuits. Almost immediately after entering Port-Royal, he was swept up

Pascal's Mémorial

In the year of Grace, 1654,
On Monday, 23rd of November, Feast of St. Clement,
Pope and Martyr, and of others in the Martyrology,
Vigil of Saint Chrysogonus, Martyr, and others,
From about half past ten in the evening until about
half past twelve

FIRE

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of
the philosophers and scholars.
Certitude. Certitude. Feeling. Joy. Peace.
God of Jesus Christ.
My God and thy God.
"Thy God shall be my God."
Forgetfulness of the world and of everything, except God.
He is to be found only by the ways taught in the Gospel.
Greatness of the soul of man.
"Righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but
I have known Thee."
Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy.
I have fallen away from Him.
They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters.
"My God, wilt Thou forsake me?"
May I not fall from Him for ever.
"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee,
The only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent."
Jesus Christ.
Jesus Christ.
I have fallen away: I have fled from Him, denied Him,
crucified Him.
May I not fall from Him forever.
We keep hold of Him only by the ways taught in the Gospel.
Renunciation, total and sweet.
Total submission to Jesus Christ and to my director.
Eternally in joy for a days's exercise on earth.
I will not forget Thy word. Amen.

into a controversy of considerable importance. Heated deliberations had been struck up between Port-Royal, the Jansenist bastion, and the Sorbonne, the Jesuit stronghold, concerning the question of divine grace. Pascal was incensed by the fact that the Jesuits believed they monopolized the way in which to obtain God's grace. The case between the antagonists was to be heard at the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne. Before long, two spurious facts became eminently noticeable: the document which was read to the Faculty was pro-Jesuit and the body deliberating the case was overtly biased against the Jansenists. The Jansenists' cause was in danger of condemnation, which was not only a serious offense, it carried the not so negligible punishment of excommunication. Pressured by his own deep conviction of God's grace, Pascal hastened to his friends' rescue and composed a small pamphlet in the form of a letter. The anonymous pamphlet was the first of his *Lettres Provinciales.*

The vivacity of the opening letter is astonishing. It appeals to both the heart and reason with irresistible force. The precision of Pascal's thought, coupled with his own mystical approach to God, brings his arguments onto a plane of common sense, honesty, and conscience.

The purpose of the *Lettres Provinciales* was to defame the very fabric of the Jesuit ethical system. By dint of his constructive vision, serene self-confidence, very acute judgment, and an astonishing facility in the manipulation of theological material, Pascal was able to dominate the known facts. To dominate — nothing more; anything else would have been foreign to his purpose. Through the *Lettres*, the misguided efforts of the Jesuits were brought to the light of day. Although Pascal had no intention of doing so, he did nothing more nor nothing less than usher in the great classical age of French literature — the *Grand Siècle* of Louis XIV.

Pascal extended the scope of his *Lettres* beyond the defense of his friends to an attack on the whole Jesuit position, which he accused of politics, expediency, and of working to substitute its own power for that of God. The *Lettres* are divided into three parts; within each a separate and distinct theme is treated: grace (letters 1-4); the relaxed morality of the Jesuits (letters 5-16); and dogmatic questions (letters 17-18). Through these *Lettres* we may plot Pascal's beginnings as a classicist whose purpose was illumination of facts. Bitterness, irony, passion and anger are their salient features. The *Lettres* are extreme, virulent and deadly — a terrific instrument of propaganda.

While the war of the pamphlets raged on, an event occurred which strengthened Pascal's belief in God's interest in him. His niece, Marguerite, was cured of an ulcer in the nose after having been touched by a thorn reputed to be from the crown of our Lord. Pascal accepted the "miracle of the thorn" explicitly. He understood the miracle as providential intervention in favor of Port-Royal and Jansenism. He believed that miracles were necessary to faith and that God still performed them.

The Jesuits, stung by Pascal's *Lettres*, resorted to the sole avenue of escape from ridicule: condemnation. A formulary was drawn up condemning Jansenism. Time lapsed. The furor hung like a pall over the battlefield. Finally Pascal, for reasons known only to himself, interrupted the *Lettres Provin-*

ciales at the nineteenth *Lettre* in mid-sentence. It appeared that the Jesuits had swallowed the last insult and would no longer tolerate the slicing invective of an anonymous rapier. They managed by heavy political subscription and manipulation to have the *Lettres Provinciales* declared heretical and condemned to be burned by the public executioner. It is reported that not one copy of the *Lettres* could be found for the purpose. The judges, unwilling to relinquish hold on their own copies, had an old almanach burned instead.

Now that the *Lettres Provinciales* were behind him, Pascal conceived of a much more ambitious undertaking. He set about qualifying the true nature of the relationship between man and God. Using the same weapons which he had used so brilliantly in the *Lettres*, he pointed them towards the true enemy: atheism. It is in the *Pensées*, that the master reveals the splendid projection of his thought. The style and effect of many of these passages — which were intended to form a book entitled, *Apologie de la Religion Chrétienne* — surpass the *Lettres.* In the *Pensées*, one encounters the intimate voice of Pascal expounding upon the most difficult problems of existence — those tremendous topics which agitate the minds of men. Finally, committing pen to paper, Pascal pellucidly portrays the two arguments that tortured him: the miserable insignificance of all that is human — human reason, human knowledge, human ambition; and the transcendent glory of God. Pascal seizes upon man's intellectual greatness to point out the moral of a contradiction. "Man is a judge of all things and a helpless earthworm, depository of truth and sink of uncertainty, crown and scum of created things." Pascal had finally come to envision man as he truly was.

Arriving at the last years of his life, Pascal subscribed to an ascetic, self-mortified state of being. He abandoned his former assured, confident, arrogant air and became gentle, kind, considerate and embraced those who offended him. He wished for nothing more than to succeed in doing those things that would ingratiate him with Jesus Christ and bring him closer to him.

During the penultimate year of his life, an event was to occur that shook the fabric of his precarious health and plunged him into disillusionment and desperation to join his Creator.

The insidious Formulary instigated by the Jesuits was revived. Members of Port-Royal were called upon to renounce the Jansenist doctrines as being contrary to the teachings of St. Augustine. Deliberations ensued. Postponements occurred. Finally, unable to withstand the pressures being exerted, Port-Royal — to avoid disbandment — reluctantly signed the Formulary.

Pascal, consumed by the treachery of politics, forgave the authorities of Port-Royal and surrendered. His resignation provoked a severe relapse in his health and on August 19, 1662, aged thirty-nine years and two months, he committed the ultimate submission.

In the moment preceding his death, although his frail body was racked by convulsions, the pain subsided, the anguish dissipated, serenity appeared triumphant, for on his lips were the words, "May God never abandon me."

Interior Designs

by MONICA RICH

A floor to sit and stand on.
to measure solidity with.
to visualize a foundation from.
to carry a structure and content of the room.

And a door through which memories can fade in and out.
to open and close at whim.
to have control over, and feel exercise of the will.
to gradually open wider and allow entrance.

Dame Julian of Norwich

JULIAN of Norwich was an anchoress who lived in an enclosed cell that adjoined the parish church of St Julians of Conisford at Norwich in England. It is thought that she withdrew from community life in order to be solitary and live as a hermit like the one in the contemporary drawing above. Although Dame Julian always spoke of herself as unlettered, she wrote extraordinarily well. Her revelations — what she called her "Showings" — came to her in 1373, when she was thirty years old. About these visions she said they were "humble, common, necessary." Little is known of her except her writings and the reference to her from *The Book of Margery Kempe* which appears on the opposite page. Dame Julian was known to be still alive in the year 1416.

— JOY BERGMAN

Dame Julian's Showings

Margery Kempe Visits Julian

AND then she was commanded by our Lord to go to an anchoress in the same city (Norwich), who was called Dame Julian. And she did so, and revealed to her the grace of compunction which God had put into her soul, of contrition, of sweetness and devotion to compassion accompanied by holy meditation and exalted contemplation, and very many holy speeches and many wonderful revelations, which she communicated to the anchoress to know if there were any fraud in this, for the anchoress was experienced in such things, and knew how to give good advice. ...Great was the holy joy which the anchoress and this creature had, communing in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ for many days when they were together.

From the Fifth Chapter of Dame Julian's "Showings"

HE shoed me something small, no bigger than a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought: What can this be? I was amazed it could last, for I thought that because of its littleness it would suddenly have fallen into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God.

From the Eighty-sixth Chapter of Julian's "Showings"

SO I was taught that love is our Lord's meaning. And I saw very certainly in this and in everything that before God made us he loved us, which love has never abated and never will be. And in this love he has done all his works, and in this love he has made all things profitable to us, and in this love our life is everlasting. In our creation we had beginning, but the love in which he created us was in him from without beginning. In this love we have our beginning. All this shall we see in God without end.

One Hour In His Presence

by EMMA S. McLAUGHLIN

WE drifted in, one by one, greeting those already there and seating ourselves comfortably on chairs or divans. We exchanged a few pleasantries while we waited for the remainder of the group to assemble. There were not many of us, six or seven at the most, yet we had been coming to the church lounge every Tuesday at eleven, seeking renewal. This was a time of withdrawing from the busyness of the world, a time to sit quietly in the presence of God. We called ourselves a spiritual growth group. Rather than giving up something during the Lenten season, we came seeking to add a new dimension to life, a new enrichment.

Dr Idler, our minister, provided each of us with a typed sheet containing a topic for the day, such as: 1. Grace to be able to listen; 2. Grace of a second chance; 3. Grace to know how to love the unlovely; 4. Grace to be in the presence of Christ; and 5. Grace of a penitent spirit. The specific grace for that day would be the one we would ask for in prayer. In addition, each day's

sheet carried several passages of scripture.

Most of us knew what to do. We had participated in similar groups in the past. We began with a mantra, repeating it silently to the rhythm of our breathing, a prelude to meditation, a means of centering down, ridding our minds of all worldly affairs, trivialities and concerns. What a pity that whenever meditation is mentioned some of us still think only of saffron-robed monks, Hindus kneeling before incense and flowers, or white-robed gurus sitting in the lotus position. Meditation was at the very center of early Christian life. Mentioned in the Bible are the many times that Jesus went aside to be alone, to commune with God. By doing so he gained stength and renewal for the hours he spent in the company of the multitudes.

Though we could not be entirely alone, we sat as far apart as conditions would allow. We chose our own mantra, sometimes using the words of the Jesus prayer used by the Eastern Church for more than a thousand years — *O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.* Varying it, we would first repeat the prayer in its entirety. With each successive repetition we would drop one or two words from the ending, until the prayer would end on the word Jesus. Often we would choose a favorite verse of scripture, or the simple words Abba, Father. We sat as still as we possibly could, eyes closed, repeating our mantra and remembering that it was not a matter of our finding God, but of our slowing down long enough to let Him find us. We continued to pursue this course until our minds were quieted. We tried to be aware, at the same time, of what was happening within us and to us. Spontaneous thoughts were seen as a movement of the spirit *only* if they created a greater sense of hope and love.

We found that the whole hour could pass in this fashion, sitting quietly in God's presence, opening our hearts and minds to Him. This was completely satisfying, but our aim included the use of scriptural passages as well. For home practice of Christian meditation, it is suggested to use a lectionary providing two or three readings for each day of the week. An Old Testament lesson, an epistle and a gospel — from which no more than eight to twelve verses are to be read from any one lesson. There are times when one verse may be sufficient for an entire meditation period.

Calm of mind, apart from the world and feeling ourselves in the presence of God, we silently read the passages, slowly and thoughtfully, not once, but several times. We visualized them, trying to become part of the action. In our mind's eye we focused on the locale, the faces of the people, the color of their garments. We imagined odors that might have been present and sensed feelings of those portrayed in the various stories. Going a step further, we assumed the identity of one of the Biblical characters, paying particular attention to our own feelings as we became part of his or her situation. We tried to understand what God was saying to us and how we were moved by it. Many Christians are so familiar with certain stories and passages from the Bible that they tend to accept their own interpretation, rather than letting God speak through the scriptures to give them new insights and meanings.

I remember the day we read the story of the Last Supper, when Jesus and

the disciples shared the Passover meal before the impending crucifixion. At the start of our meditation it was suggested that after reading the passage, we picture it, then approach the table and find *our* place. We were asked to notice, in particular, how we felt. Were we uneasy as outsiders? Or did we feel loved and accepted?

Breathlessly I approached the table, hesitant, standing behind the disciples unnoticed, a silent observer of this very familiar scene. I could see the wine swirling in the cup — red. I noticed Peter's striped robe. His hands were huge, coarse from his days of fishing. I looked at John. His face glowed with his great love for the Master, and yet his eyes were so sad. My gaze swept the faces of all assembled, sliding from one to another. Then I drew close and tried to find *my* place. The disciples looked at me with no sign of recognition, no seeming welcome. I became concerned there would be no room for me. Finally, they moved closer to each other, making a space at the table, and I sat down. The bread was passed and I received it with the chosen. The wine followed, and I drank. Christ stood up to leave and I, forewarned of what was to happen, found my eyes blinded with hot tears of remorse. Still it was good to have been at His table, to have shared the Last Supper.

On another occasion we read the story of the Prodigal Son and assumed the identities of one of the three: the father, the steadfast son or the prodigal son. In thought we dialogued, letting the character we had chosen say whatever was in his heart at the time and allowing the others to say what they would. This is a good exercise and reveals many hidden traits in each of us. We wrote down our dialogue as it happened and, at the end of the session, we shared it if we so desired. I identified with the steadfast son and was surprised to hear him say that he never had cared for his brother and thought him extremely lazy, selfish and thoughtless where the father was concerned. *He* would have been happy if the prodigal son had never returned. His doing so only upset the status quo. The family would have been better off without him. Could this be an indication that *I* am unwilling to share myself freely with others? Do *I* desire too great a portion of love for myself? By walking in the skin of another we learn more about ourselves. Something should happen as a result of an hour spent in the presence of God. Some resolve should take place. We tried to push our reflections to this point. There should be some difference in life for having spent this period in silent prayer.

At times we thought God clearly spoke, for we received a fresh outlook, a new insight. Other times we were so tempest-tossed that nothing seemed to happen. Still we needed that time of silence, of prayer, and no matter what did or did not transpire, we always went our separate ways refreshed.

I am reminded of a story by Anthony Bloom in "Beginning to Pray", which was included on one of our daily sheets. It is the story of an old peasant who spent hours and hours sitting in the chapel, motionless, doing nothing. The priest said to him, "What are you doing all these hours?" The old peasant replied, "I look at Him, He looks at me, and we are happy." Some days this will be *all* that happens in Christian meditation, but how rewarding that hour spent in His Presence.

Squaring The Circle: The East in the West

by SUSAN PITAK

FOR MANY, modern-day Christianity has lost its meaning. Ritual has become an outer husk lacking any inner essence. This lack of essence is evident in many aspects of American culture. It is reflected in our art forms and architecture. Customarily the most important values of a civilization are embodied in its highest monuments. In medieval times the highest buildings were cathedrals, whereas today they are office buildings devoted to commerce. Why this has happened is perhaps confirmed within the substance of the religion itself. Joseph Campbell claims Christianity is a religion given over to the enjoyment of guilt.

Primitive societies were dominated by a spirit of animism. All of nature

was alive to the primitive man, and he was a part of nature. He remained close to his unconscious processes. Life was seen in terms of repeating cycles, the concept of historical time (of things having a beginning and an end) had not yet been discovered. The concept of man as being part of nature was shattered in Genesis, when God expelled Adam and Eve from paradise. This created a duality of self and object which dominates Western philosophical and religious thought. God gives man dominion over animals: they are objects apart, and man is their master. This sets up the future as a play of man against nature. To Christianity human nature is corrupt. Natural impulses must be retrained, baptized, or circumcized. Nature must be subjugated and brought to its knees to serve man. This point of view has stripped our world of much of its natural resources. We have been taken over by a theology of consumption — the more we consume, the better we are.

In Indian mythology there is a legend in which two brothers go to conquer a monster who lives in a cave by a lake. The monster sees the boys' reflections in the lake and mistakes the reflections for the boys themselves. He repeatedly attacks the reflections until he is exhausted, whereupon the boys easily kill him. This mistaking of shadow for substance seems to be the specter haunting the West today. It is the attitude of the materialist who believes he will achieve happiness through the acquisition of objects.

Traditionally, religion has two important tasks to perform: one is to provide an experience of ecstasy or the transcendental, and the other is to help preserve the social order. When these two functions are both genuinely felt and in balance, there ensues a stable and integrated society. When a religion gets too far from its source and has only constraints to offer, it is in trouble. This is what appears to be happening to many Christian sects today, and this may in fact be a result of Christian attitudes toward the relationship of man and nature.

It is paradoxical that the ultimate goal of both Hinduism and Christianity are the same — that of becoming transparent to the transcendental — but the philosophical outlooks sharply diverge. The West's outlook is objective, ruled by principles of causality as seen in existence taking place in a field of space and time. The East's outlook is subjective: all exists at once. Time and space are just another manifestation of "maya," the illusion, and are of no real meaning. This Eastern concept can perhaps be illustrated by a metaphor. Here, the sun represents the power of life disengaged from the field of time, and the moon represents life as engaged within the field of time. The moon, however, is just a reflection of the sun's light and not the light itself.

The Bhagavad Gita gives a perfect example of the subjective outlook. This stupendous "Song of the Blessed" depicts a battlefield where two armies stand face to face on the eve of battle. Arjuna, one of the commanders, drives his war chariot between the lines and, horrified at the thought of the forthcoming slaughter, wants to call off the battle. Lord Krishna, the "Mighty One," who temporarily assumes the role of charioteer and incarnates transcendental wisdom, urges him to fight regardless of the "objective" consequences. His speech is the essence of the Gita's message: Arjuna must fight

Differences in Eastern and Western Thought

EAST	WEST
1) Subjective, intuitive, a right brain orientation.	1) Objective, linear, analytical, a left brain orientation.
2) Causality is a part of the illusion. The universe cannot be understood intellectually, only experientially.	2) The universe is a machine. It can be understood as a chain of cause and effect occurring in space and time.
3) There is no duality, all is one. Deities are the personifications of the energy within you.	3) Man is separate and apart. You are not God, God is outside you.
4) Nature is alive as the divine mother, and we are one with her.	4) Nature is inert, and exists for man to tame and use.
5) All paradoxes are easily incorporated into Hindu thought, since the subjective view can incorporate all views.	5) Paradoxes must be explained by the rational mind, this has resulted in a split between religion and science.
6) You have always existed and you always will.	6) You will never exist again and you never existed before.
7) The body is a vehicle of the spirit and is closely connected to it.	7) Because of original sin, the soul is like a prisoner in the mortal body.
8) True knowledge resides in the subjective unconscious.	8) Conscious reality is what is real. "I think therefore I am."
9) The mind is one with Maya, illusion.	9) The mind represents our true nature.
10) There is a relationship between capacity for knowledge and the total condition of the knower. The acquisition of knowledge transforms the knower to a higher plane of consciousness.	10) Knowledge is cerebral, the conscious mind can grasp it intellectually without any self-involvement or change in the knower.

with serenity and detachment because it is his duty as a professional warrior, because he is bound by the karma of his past and has to go through all his appointed duties no matter how evil the consequences may seem to others. Since actions have no objective value, his sole duty is his own subjective state. The massacre he is about to start is solely the concern of his victims. The "Mighty One" emphasizes the point by saying to Arjuna: "You sorrow for men who do not need your sorrow . . . . Wise men do not sorrow for the living or the dead . . . . Long since have these men in truth been slain by Me: yours is the mere occasion. Slay them, then. Why falter?" Lord Krishna then adds: "Consider pleasure and pain, wealth and poverty, victory and defeat, as of equal worth. Prepare for the combat. Acting in this way thou wilt not become stained by guilt."

The immediate message: there is no such thing as objective reality. And the ultimate message: give thought to nothing but the act, renounce its fruits. . . . For him who achieves inward detachment neither good nor evil exists any longer. We are far from Christian charity and love.

It is interesting to note that the findings of modern physics support the Eastern viewpoint. Fritjof Capra — in his book *The Tao of Physics* — states without ambiguity that the commonsensical world of separate and distinct objects in which we believe we live simply does not exist.

Implications

To be detached from the emotions is considered an undesirable process by most schools of psychotherapy. But this kind of detached attitude toward the real world is an indispensable part of the spiritual approach. In *The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist*, Samuel Sandweiss perceives the problem as one of development. He claims that at the beginning of life, it is important to differentiate ourselves and experience our emotions, but that as we evolve we can become detached and leave our egos behind. He claims that modern psychiatry has both failed to differentiate a higher self than the ego, and has not moved beyond duality. The psychiatrist's position is that God is manufactured by man, that belief in a higher self is a defense against emotions. On the other hand, the spiritual attitude regards attachment to the emotions as a barrier to realizing one's higher self. If we endorse the Eastern viewpoint that ego is different from self, "atman" — our true nature, then modern-day ego psychology cannot solve man's inner problems by ministering to his ego.

Dr Sandweiss relates the process of attaining spirituality to the life process. Life involves the two basic processes of becoming more differentiated (at life's beginning) and less differentiated (at life's end, when the body breaks down). Where mental health is seen as arising from a well-developed sense of individuality, Dr Sandweiss claims that there is a whole world of evolution beyond the stage of individuation. One can easily fall into the trap of overvaluing the mind and expression of emotion at the expense of morality. "My belief is," he writes, "that at that point in our development when we are trying to become more individual and defined, it would be harmful to detach

from the emotions. To do so would be to repress primary energies just at the time we are learning about them. It would be like giving up walking before we learned to walk.

"After we have attained a state of individuality and identity, it is time to surrender the ego or personality in order to merge with a higher self, to give up involvement with the senses in favor of a deeper involvement with God."

This seems to be the difference between repression and detachment. The first is separating oneself out of fear. The second is surrendering one's emotions willingly as part of the desire to grow, after having gained awareness and a level of mastery over them.

"You must not be a bit of blotting paper, absorbing all the passions and emotions, all the joys and griefs that the actress nature demonstrates on the stage of life," Sandweiss says. "You must be a lotus unfolding its petals when the sun rises in the sky, unaffected by the slush where it is born, or the water which sustains it."

In a sense, the message of Christianity is the same. Christ's death on the cross is the symbolic representation of the death of the ego in order to experience transcendence and become one again joined to the Father. Thus these two great philosophical systems are intertwined.

There are different aspects of Hinduism, but karma yoga — the ideal of which is liberation through selfless action in the world, which was made so famous by Gandhi — seems to unite with the Christian concept of love and gives us the best of these two worlds.

The East in the West

The Ramakrishna Mission and Vedanta Societies. Vivekananda goes to the World Parliament of Religions in 1893. This marks the beginning of institutionalized Eastern philosophy in America. The Vedanta Society is founded in New York.

The Self-Realization Fellowship. Twenty years after, Paramahansa Yogananda arrives in America. He remained in America for over 30 years, the first yogic master to do so.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation Movement. This gained popularity in the sixties. The Beatles were his most famous adherents.

Krishna Consciousness. Spread by Swami Bhaktivedanta, who came to America when he was in his seventies and penniless — he began by working with hippies and Bowery derelicts.

Glossary of Eastern Terms

Ashram: The dwelling place or community where a spiritual discipline is practiced.
Chakras: The psychic or spiritual centers of the body: 1) *muladhara*, located at the base of the spinal column; 2) *svadhishthana*, located in the reproductive organs; 3) *manipura*, located at the navel; 4) *anahata*, located in the heart; 5) *vishuddha*, located at the base of the throat; 6) *ajna*, located between the eyebrows; 7) *sahasrara*, located at the crown of the head.
Chiti: The energy of consciousness which creates and sustains the world.
Four Bodies: 1) *physical body*, that which we experience in the waking state; 2) *subtle body*, that which we experience in the dream state; 3) *causal body*, that which we experience in a deep sleep state; 4) *supracausal body*, that which we experience in a state of meditation.
Four Noble Truths: Buddha's teaching that 1) existence involves inevitable suffering for all people; 2) this suffering springs from egocentrism; 3) egocentrism can be rooted out; 4) that one must follow the eight steps designed to root out egocentrism.
Guru: A spiritual guide or teacher invested with the right to give initiation. A *Siddha* guru is able to awaken the *shakti*, the spiritual energy that creates, maintains, and dissolves the universe.
Hatha yoga: The yoga path that leads to release through union of the mind with the body.
Isness: Zen term used to emphasize the immediate state of being.
Jains: Followers of an Indian religious doctrine founded by Vardhamana Mahavira in the sixth century B.C.
Karma yoga: The yoga path that leads to release through selfless activity.
Kundalini yoga: The yoga path that awakens the "serpent power" and transforms it into the instrument of individual as well as collective evolution to self-realization and cosmic-consciousness.
Om Namah Shivaya: A mantra meaning, "I bow to the Lord, who is the inner Self."
Sadhana: The practice of spiritual discipline.
Samsara: The life of phenomena; the opposite of Nirvana.
Satori: Deep enlightenment; the truth beyond dualism and discrimination.
Shivaism: School of philosophy which identifies Shiva as the all-pervasive reality.
Siddha yoga: The yoga path that leads to perfection through mastery of one's senses and mind.
Sutra: Sanskrit word for Buddhist scriptures, meaning a discourse and accepted as an authoritative teaching.
Yoga: A system of spiritual and physical exercises meant to still the mind; leading to the state of oneness with self and God.

The Nuclear Dragon

by ANN WOOLFOLK

THE DRAGON has long been a symbol of nature. It has symbolized both the terrifying aspects of nature and the benign. It has been variously named the Wise, the Embracer, the Overseer, the Terrible, and the Lord of the World. In China, the dragon represented the whole of nature. The emperor Fu Hsi was said to have taken dragon form and tamed the Yellow River by digging dikes, canals and irrigation ditches. The dragon was considered to be an imperial kin who ruled side by side with the emperor. There was not a mountain or a river that was not animated by the dragon's breath, and the seas were governed by him. He was feared for his great powers of destruction, and

in some eastern countries, offered human sacrifices. Nevertheless, the rewards of his natural blessings were considered to be great and he was the symbol of good luck.

Western man pictured the dragon differently. The dragon was associated in his mind with the crooked serpent that invaded the Garden of Eden. The oldest story in the Bible that describes the beginnings of the world occurs in fragments of the Psalms and in the book of Job. In it God is pictured hacking to pieces the female dragon, Rahab. This story does not so much depict the creation of the universe as show man's desire for mastery over nature. Always uncomfortable with the idea of his radical animality, Western man did not choose to identify with the nature dragon. Over the centuries he moved into cities, imposed his own pattern on things, and forgot that he was nature's child. He invented the new dragon of technology although it was still fueled by the same natural forces. The new technology was often wasteful as well as dangerous, and nowhere was this more true than in the development of nuclear weapons. The aggressiveness of nature at its worst had been reborn.

One of man's reasons for developing his new technologies rather than contenting himself to live close to nature, was that he did not trust the old god. Nature was too cruel, too capricious to be counted on. Ironically, through the reliance on nuclear technology, he finds himself back in the same primal grip that he had hoped to escape. The destructive capacities that he has unleashed go beyond his control, backfiring against him. In John Hersey's account of the bombing of Hiroshima, we see the dragon of nature surface from behind his servant's garb. One survivor's description goes as follows:

"Then a trememdous flash of light cut across the sky. Mr. Tanimoto had the distinct recollection that it travelled from east to west, from the city towards the hills. It seemed a sheet of sun."

The flash of the bomb discolored concrete to a light reddish tint and imprinted on the bodies of the victims the patterns of the clothes they wore. Hazy human silhouettes were found on walls and buildings after the blast.

Mr. Tanimoto was standing next to his house when the bomb was dropped. When he saw the flash, he threw himself down into his garden and bellied up against a large rock. He heard nothing, nor did anyone else in the city of Hiroshima report hearing the roar of the bomb. Twenty miles outside of the city, however, a fisherman said that he had seen the flash and heard a thunder that was greater than that of B-29s hitting targets only five miles away.

Hersey continues: "When he dared, Mr. Tanimoto raised his head and saw that the rayon man's house had collapsed. Such clouds of dust had risen that there was a sort of twilight around. Under what seemed to be a local dust cloud, the day grew darker and darker."

Hiroshima is a city built on seven deltic rivers. The rivers and bridges provided escape routes for many of those fleeing the blaze of fires that broke

Oppenheimer at Los Alamos

AT 5:30 on the morning of July 16, 1945, in a desert area known as the Jornada del Muerto in the Alamogordo air base, a stupendous white flash tore apart the sky, dazzling and blinding a small group of scientists ten thousand yards away. The enormously bright ball of fire grew steadily larger as if to wipe out the atmosphere and engulf the world, leading some terrified scientists into believing that they had lost control of man's first nuclear explosion. At this very moment, an apparently incongruous incident took place: Robert Oppenheimer, director of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and prime coordinator of the atomic experiment, began to hum some stanzas he had read years before when he was studying Sanskrit:

divi surya-sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthita
yadi bhah sadrsi sa syad bhasas tasya mah'atmanah

If the radiance of a thousand suns
Were to burst into the sky
That would perhaps be like
The splendour of the Mighty One.

An imaginative description of a possible nuclear explosion? Far from it; in fact, it was a poetic rendering of the explosive nature of mystical ecstasy written thousands of years ago on the banks of the Ganges: the Mighty One, emanation of the Godhead, grants an awe-struck Arjuna his first staggering insight into the mysteries of the inner Self.

As the gigantic nuclear cloud mushroomed up to the stratosphere followed by a doomsday roar, Oppenheimer continued with the verses in which the Mighty One reveals Himself:

I am become death
The shatterer of worlds.

Then and there, Oppenheimer symbolized a most extraordinary conjunction — the juxtaposition of Western civilization's most terrifying scientific achievement with the most dazzling description of the mystical experience given us by the *Bhagavad Gita*, India's greatest literary monument.

From THE EYE OF SHIVA, by Amaury de Riencourt. Copyright 1981 by Amaury de Riencourt. Reprinted by permission of William Morrow & Co., Inc.

Yogananda's "Bombproof Shelter"

THE WESTERN DAY is nearing when the inner science of self-control will be found as necessary as the outer conquest of Nature. The Atomic Age will see men's minds sobered and broadened by the now scientifically indisputable truth that matter is in reality a concentrate of energy. The human mind can and must liberate within itself energies greater than those within stones and metals, lest the material atomic giant, newly unleashed, turn on the world in mindless destruction. An indirect benefit of mankind's concern over atomic bombs may be an increased practical interest in the science of yoga, a "bombproof shelter" truly.

— Paramahansa Yogananda
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI

out in the city. Across one of these rivers was a refuge area on an old estate called Asano Park. The park was far enough away from the explosion that its trees were still alive. The refugees found places to rest beneath the pines and laurels. The bridges and pools brought back a sense of calm. The account goes on:

"Mr. Tanimoto found a good sized pleasure punt drawn up on the bank, but in and around it was an awful tableau — five dead men, nearly naked, badly burned, who must have expired more or less at once, for they were in attitudes which suggested that they had been working together to push the boat down the river. Mr. Tanimoto lifted them away from the boat, and as he did so he experienced such a horror at disturbing the dead, preventing them, he momentarily felt, from launching their craft and going on their ghostly way, that he said out loud, "Please forgive me for taking this boat, I must use it for others who are alive."

The fire that raged in the city followed the refugees to the park. Then it rained. The drops of rain were so big that the refugees believed that the Americans were spraying gasoline on them. But the drops were only water. As they fell, another force of nature came to life. The wind grew to great strength and suddenly, probably because of the tremendous convection set up by the blazing city, a whirlwind ripped through the park. Huge trees fell while small ones were uprooted and flew in the air. Above the heads of the survivors, far up, revolved a twisting funnel in which a wild array of flat debris gyrated: pieces of iron roofing, papers, doors and strips of matting.

By afternoon, having ferried many refugees into the park across the river, Mr. Tanimoto headed back into the city. Many of the injured were begging for food. The following is a description of Mr. Tanimoto's sojourn into Hiroshima with a group of German priests:

"At first, when they got among the rows of prostrate houses, they did not know where they were. The change was too sudden. From the busy city of two hundred and forty-five thousand that morning to a mere pattern of residue in the afternoon. The asphalt of the streets was still so soft and hot from the fires that walking was uncomfortable. They encountered one person who said to them as they passed, "my husband is under those ashes." At the mission of the German priests, Mr. Tanimoto went on his way alone. The priests stopped to retrieve a pumpkin cooked on the vine beside their razed building. They tasted it and found that it was good."

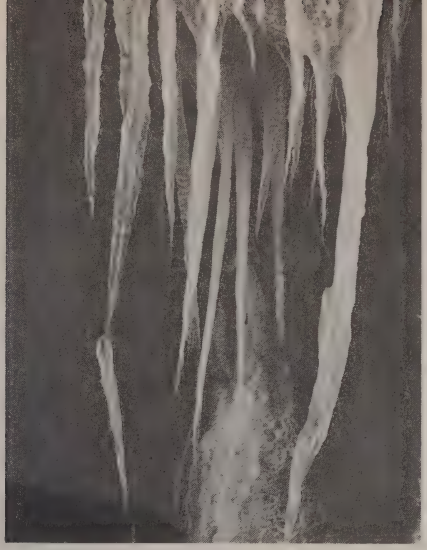
After the initial blast of the bomb, people continued to die day after day of a strange illness. The new deaths were generally associated with radiation poisoning. The rays destroyed body cells, causing their nuclei to degenerate and break their walls. Deaths from radiation poisoning came in several stages, accompanied by various symptoms. The poisoned skin dropped off in sheets. Diarrhea, blood disorders, fevers, skin ulcers and the loss of hair were commonplace. Lower doses of radiation that did not bring death at the time

of the blast caused cases of leukemia to appear five years later. Cancer connected with radiation appeared as much as twelve to thirty-five years later as well as genetic diseases that caused abnormalities to occur in newborn babies.

It has been half a lifetime since the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, yet man has not learned that city's bitter lesson; the lesson that would allow him to see through the artificiality of his social structures and into the fundamental truth of his vulnerability. The history of man's progress as a social animal has been piecemeal at best. In forcing his own patterns over those of nature, he has had to rely on the reasoning powers of a rather recently developed brain. A much older reference as to how to proceed, his instinct, has been supressed. It is clear, however, from our continued involvements in war that underneath the guise of reason, an older, more habitual claim keeps asserting itself: man's aggressiveness. It is this aggression that has made him arm the new dragon of technology in our midst.

In primitive societies men were few and the business of how to deal with a common threat was often worked out among the heads of a handful of families. Today when populations are large and leaders are distant and inaccessible, the problem of knowing what is the best defense for our country is much more difficult. As a consequence we often let our fears be soothed by words of assurance and the hope that our future is in safe hands. But reasonable assurances may not be enough as an old allegory from the animal kingdom points out.

A lion resting on a riverbank, was approached by a scorpion who wished to be carried across the river. "How do I know that you won't sting me?" asked the lion. "You appear to be a very dangerous passenger." The scorpion looked up at the lion with sympathetic concern. "I can offer you the best of assurances," said the scorpion, "I don't know how to swim and if I were to sting you, I would drown myself." The lion considered the scorpion's answer and decided to ferry the scorpion across the river. The scorpion mounted the lion's back and they began the journey across the river. Suddenly, the lion felt the scorpion's sting. As the lion began to drown from the effect of the poison, he heard a repentant voice at his ear. "I am so sorry," whispered the scorpion, "but you know how hard it is to escape one's nature."



Outcome

by POLLYANNA SEDZIOL

Three decreasing icicles
on a slender branch
are all that remain
of yesterday's brief return
to wintering;

The sun will gently
and effectively
warm them away —
all winter things
yield to spring.

Fading memories of
sharp words spoken in haste
are all that remain of
yesterday's brief return
to quarreling;

Forgiveness is gently
and effectively
warming them away —
our angry moments always
yield to love.

Two Snows

A Short Story by ELIZABETH SOCOLOW

THE first snowstorm I hid behind the floor-to-ceiling curtains. They were wet with the cold damp of the day, and the windows to the garden were cold, the door panes were ice-glazed, and the bird bath was mounded with snow. I hid behind the curtains to get as close into the snow as I could. I wanted to sneak outside, but the garden door was locked, and Agnes had the key. Keys turned in locks, the way the flakes swirled, the way smoke spiraled. But snow was separate, like schools of fish in the bay in summer, almost alive.

My mother was gone to work. Soon she was coming back. Soon she was coming back with a new baby. But that would not be until after winter, and after summer and the beach. Today she was just gone to work, like my father, but it was different work in a different place. I never saw her work. Or her place. It was different from the work Agnes did. Agnes was smoking in the kitchen. She had the key to the garden door, the keys to the cupboards, and to all the house. She was ironing in the kitchen where it was warm, listening to Young Dr Malone. I was supposed to be leaving her alone with the radio and the ironing. I was supposed to be in my bed. But it was the first snow I ever saw that did this, and I had sneaked to the living room and got lost behind the curtains.

I remember thinking about the curtains, how thick they were, how annoying it was that the big brown leaves were so ugly, and that they stayed brown in summer, when they should have turned green. The leaves of those curtains may in fact have been green not brown, but what I was thinking about was how I wished the leaves changed with the seasons. I was thinking that I wanted to get out in the snow and that my father forbid me, because of the War. I was also thinking about the name of the curtains, which has nudged me from time to time since. Why, if curtains drop from ceiling to floor, do people pretend they climb from floor to ceiling? Curtains like that are very heavy. They muffle sound. They are breakfronts against the wind. I remember thinking the sound "floor-to-ceiling" and "ceiling-to-floor" over and over again, knowing, for the first time, in that first snow, that the fall of the sounds and not the true description of the curtains made their name what it was.

I remember remembering again, even then, how angry I was at my father and the War for not allowing me out in the snow. I was supposed to be napping. Instead I let myself be entranced by the words for draping curtains and the snow. I fell into a kind of sleep, standing, wrapped in the thick damp of those brown-leaved curtains when I heard Agnes murmuring: "So help me, I'll have to go to the police." I came out of the curtains.

"Can I come too?" I asked.

"Pet, it was you I was missing, calling over and over," she said, laughing, holding me, tears streaming down her face.

"Can't we go tell the police and walk there?"

"We can tell your father, tonight. This tale will make him laugh himself silly. O me, O my, never a dull moment." She may not have said all those things then. They were among her stock phrases. And she did tell my father, and he did not think it was funny, and he did not let me out in the snow and

my rage at him and at the War got larger as I grew.

The second snow was after the War, not one of the great storms of New York City history, but not an altogether minor one either. By then I was six, and I was still trying to understand my father and still plotting ways into the snow. I had had scarlet fever and, according to family lore, I almost died. It had felt fine to me. I got lighter and lighter and hotter and hotter one afternoon, until I thought I was liquid fire. I was the blue flame dancing on alcohol, the one my father lit with a braided candle on Saturday nights to mark the end of the Sabbath, for which the Jews had died, he said. The thermometer said 107, they said.

Having almost died, they said, without having been out in the snow, having almost died, because, I insisted, I had not been allowed out in the snow, still did not convince my father that now I should be allowed out to get strong and tough. My father was more insistent than ever that I stay in. I might get scarlet fever again. By six I was convinced the Jews had died because they would not let their children out in the snow, kept them in, kept them in to themselves, for everything.

The time of the second snow in 1946, I spent the day looking out the dining room window, up at the sky where the bursts of falling whiteness came from. The dining room window gave onto the street of that basement apartment. It began at my shoulders. I was eye level with small dogs and boot-fasteners on the feet walking past. I watched while the grocery across the street disappeared into the thick white. I watched all the houses on that side of the street move into the line of cars. Then those cars went into the white and I could barely see the cars parked on my own side of the street. Dogs came to sniff at my head through the glass. I looked into the eyes of the dogs and watched them flick their heads to rid themselves of snow, saw how they held their heads low, as if trying to get under it somehow, or to swim with their noses. If I followed the leashes up, there would be a gloved hand and then, against the hidden sky, the hooded head of the woman who walked the dog, or the man. Mostly the men did not wear hats. And when I looked up at the people, if they saw me at all, I could tell they felt sorry for me, having to stay in, the way I felt sorry for the orphan child at the restaurant window in the storybook, looking at all the steaming food and having to stay out.

I did not want anyone feeling sorry for me, so I started smiling. There was no reason to feel sorry for me. There just had to be some plan to help me get out in the snow. I began by studying how people walked in the snow, staring straight ahead, head bent to the ground. The snow was like needles pricking cheeks. You wouldn't want needles in your eyes. The people kept their eyes almost all the way closed and that was why they didn't always see me at the window. Even the dogs used their noses more than usual to steer with. I would have to remember, when I finally got into the snow, to keep my eyes almost all the way closed. I practiced. I looked up into the sky with my eyes pressed shut, and the light made rainbows, the same way it happened on the beach if the water got in my lashes. It was winter now. I was so lucky. I was allowed out at the beach in summer, when there was no snow. No one

had to feel sorry for me.

I could see through the faint rainbows at my lashes, swirls of feathered pebbles pouring down, thicker and thinner, faster and slower onto the street. Sometimes Alexian's grocery appeared in the thinness; mostly it was not there. They did not like me to play with Alexian's boy. They kept me in the day of the parade when all the noise happened because the War was over, all the happiness, and the people singing in the streets, and the sirens that did not mean a fire or an ambulance. They kept the radio on. They would not let me go out with Agnes. They would not let me play with Alexi Alexian. They said people would get drunk. They said there were too many people. I might get crushed or lost. And the drunk people would vomit. I might step on vomit. My father insisted that was why I could not celebrate the end of the War and I said I could not understand how any person wouldn't step *around* it. And once on the playground Carol vomited all over me and it hadn't been so bad. I begged to go with Agnes to celebrate the end of the War that killed the Jews. But I was not allowed to go, and that was summer. I wanted not to be so precious. I wanted to be taken for granted. I wanted them to breathe me like air. I tried very hard as I watched the snowstorm and saw Alexi Alexian playing with the snow, throwing snowballs towards me, though I was sure he could not see me in the dim window at the corner. I tried very hard to think of the beach and what I could do. I kept smiling. I did not want the faces at the end of the leashes to feel sorry for me.

Mostly, when he could, he kept me in the car with my mother. In winter that felt good. My mother read to me while he made his rounds. My mother knitted and talked. She would not let me out in the snow, but being in the car was closer to being in the snow. The windows of the cars were made in the shapes of smaller cars, and there was less between me and the snow. I forced myself to feel lucky. I had on my blue coat and snowpants and mittens and a woolen hat under the hood of my coat and my mother would not let me open the window even a crack. But sometimes if my mother dropped stitches from her knttting and bent her head and started counting or got out of the car to use the hospital bathroom because my father was taking so long making his rounds and my mother could not wait as long as I could, not since she had the baby who always got left home, sometimes when my mother went into the hospital, I opened the window and put out my head and hands. I had to be careful to stay outside only so long, to give myself time to wipe away the snow. I was good at it. I never got caught. Once, I even got out of the car and rubbed my face with snow, felt its sharp cold, the prickling of crystal. I tasted it, and dreamed vanilla running through the ice. I managed to rub all the snow away before my mother came back, and I was sitting on the car seat when she did come. I had a book on my lap, and she laughed and said: "Upside down. What do you think you're doing reading upside down?"

That one time when I got caught reading upside down, but did not get caught in the snow was how I got to have a taste of it. I wanted more. But my mother would never take me to the hospital bathroom or to the corner store at the hospital to buy the newspaper. None of my inventive requests worked.

I could understand what was happening. I could understand that now that there were no more Germans to kill me, there had to be germs. I could understand about meanness and could see, easily, those ovens like the one in Hansel and Gretel, only bigger, and I could feel why I might want to put Alexi and all the people who could go out in the snow, all the children in their beautiful red and yellow and blue hats and mittens, with comfortable holes in them, the children running with big boots on, running through the snow, down the block into the park, yes, I could want to put all of them in an oven and melt the snow and wipe out the whole world like a sand castle at the beach. It was the most terrible wish in the world. But it was easy. It wasn't hard to understand. It didn't last long. It was only a terrible wish because the ovens were so big, and the children so happy if they were allowed out enough.

Seven was coming. It was driving down at me like the snow against the glass. Soon it would be with me. As the woman with the cocker spaniel left my window view on her way back home, all the heat that had been my blushing because she felt sorry for me went into tears. And I knew, because it came to me as the snow stopped suddenly, the way it sometimes can, a few flakes as an end and then nothing, and all the houses and cars came into sight coated white, that my parents were wrong. While the War was still happening there was a chance I had held that they were right. On that chance, I obeyed and did not go out in the snow except for that once at the hospital. But I knew I would have to be disobedient from now on, with other children, with friends, at their houses. I might be punished. I might catch cold. I might get scarlet fever again or catch death. I might die the way all the other Jewish children had died in Europe, but not like them, because I chose, because I was not marched off the way I made my dolls walk, moving their legs for them. It was all right to catch cold in the snow, to catch death. My father was wrong, and I was crying and crying at the window as the second snow stopped.

And now there was a man coming down the block walking two dogs in one of those double collars. My mother would be coming soon. I would have to stop crying. I had to look intelligent when my mother came home, never sad. She screamed when I cried. But this was sadder than that: to know that though I loved them, and I still did, that much still, I could not go on listening and listening and listening to my parents who acted as if the War had never stopped.

One Word

by EMILY SARGENT COUNCILMAN

Shalom, Shalom,
end and beginning,
on into Light,
Shalom, Shalom.

SUFISM REORIENTED

An Interview with Barbara and Allan Fertziger by MARION DUNHAM

Last summer we visited Barbara and Allan Fertziger at the Sufi Center in Washington, D.C. The center is located in the rolling hills of the Washington suburbs and has been transformed from a former prep-school into a haven of tranquility and beauty. About fifty people have been responsible for this remarkable transformation, the members having done all the work themselves in a short period of time. We talked with Barbara and Allan in a sun-filled, airy room with yellow moirê-covered walls, plush ivory carpeting, and peach colored polished cotton upholstered furniture. The simple opulence and calm of the setting are reflections of the Sufi philosophy that beauty and harmony are integral parts of the search for spiritual advancement.

FIP: For background, can you tell us something about your lives before you came to Sufism?

Allan: Barbara and I were both raised as Orthodox Jews. I went to Hebrew school, but this was a traditional and cultural experience more than a religious one.

By education and consciousness, I am a scientist. As I look at it retrospectively, I see that anything related to God, anything spiritual or non-material, had no meaning for me. Like most Jewish children, I learned to speak Hebrew, but not to understand it — to recite the prayers without understanding their meaning or significance. Religion was an ethnic legacy. I paid obeisance out of respect, but it had no usefulness or function in my day-to-day life. *That* utility came from schools. *That* was my path. The *meaning* of my life was to study how the brain worked. I was thrilled to be a neuro-scientist well beyond my Ph.D.

FIP: In this materialistic, scientific frame of mind, did you have something gnawing away at you as if that weren't enough? Were you full of questions about life and its meaning?

Allan: No. I was very content.

Barbara: My father practiced Orthodox Judaism, and it was meaningful for him. I respected that, but found it didn't enrich the meaning of my life.

In front of Meher Baba's portrait, Barbara and Allan Fertziger expound on his teachings and Sufism.

In the 'sixties, my focus was psychological, and this answered my questions. I would read books like *Love and Will* by Rollo May. I'd go to seminars in New York on things related to sensitivity training. That was very nutritious for that time.

As the 'sixties ended, I began to reach dead ends in terms of psychological answers and I went through a slow transition to Eastern thought. I read books on Zen and Taoism.

Allan: Barbara and I were married in New York City in 1970 and immediately moved to Baltimore, where I took my first professional job. I'd received my Ph.D. from Ann Arbor in 1968 and had done two post-doctorates in New York. My first job was at the University of Maryland Medical School. Despite the political activism of the times, I was not involved. My thinking was always conservative, my goal a house in the suburbs, a couple of kids. I wanted to avoid the Vietnam War because I didn't want to get shot. Even my professional decisions were sort of by default. In a sense, I chose to be a neuroscientist because I had to do *something.* But in grad school I really got into physiology. I was a hard-core scientist. For me it was *synapses!* Rollo May and Erich Fromm were nothing. Psychology was gibberish, and I avoided it.

But things began to happen to me in the 'seventies.

FIP: Can you elaborate?

Allan: Well, I don't consider this a direct cause-and-effect relationship leading me into religious and spiritual pursuits, but I had been married for a number of years and my wife died in childbirth. Suddenly those years of the past stopped for me, and the present began. Losing my wife and our newborn child was an emotional wipeout, staggering. Yet I had to pick up the pieces and start over. I felt like a different person although the old person was still there. My whole consciousness was different.

I took a trip to Europe and it blew my mind to learn that there were alternate lifestyles. People *ate* differently! They actually relaxed in the sun at the beach! This was my first real experience of people who surrounded themselves with beauty and culture.

FIP: And when you came back?

Allan: Fate has always played a major part in my life. "Fate" meaning something other than my own willfulness. Soon after I returned, I met Barbara, and we connected very quickly. I was very straight — and she seemed to be into what I considered "groovy" things. But I began to ask questions, something I'd never been able to do before. You see, the death of my wife was such a well-defined reference point. I can see myself before and after very clearly. I can remember using kittens in my scientific experiments and feeling like a Nazi, but never questioning what I was doing. Now suddenly meaning

took on meaning. It was hard to go to work — it all seemed so silly. I wasn't a thinker. I was just feeling and reeling. But then, wow, did I become a thinker! I took this job in Baltimore at the medical school.

FIP: Barbara, where were you at this point?

Barbara: When we moved down here, I was teaching first grade in an inner-city school in Baltimore. This was a class of thirty-four kids who were repeating first grade for the second or third time. It was interesting but *hard* work.

My interest in art had been growing for some time and financially we were able to allow for this interest. A lot of nice things began to happen — seemingly serendipitously — like meeting designers. I believe there is an implicit timing to things. If you are ready for something and sensitive enough to see subtle connections, things click into place. I had to put in some effort, but the timing was right and the ball was rolling. I began weaving designs on silk.

It was very much the same with the spiritual path. I'd already been thinking about Buddhism and Zen — never feeling that a prerequisite for any of this was being non-Jewish. I still don't. Allan was also reading Zen.

Allan: Yes — but mostly because of my interest in the nervous system! My thinking became less and less synapses and more and more *mind.* At that time I didn't understand the dichotomy between the materialist view of mind and the spiritualist view. One saw mind as a blind machine, the other as an enlightened machine.

I became interested in Eastern religions. They seemed so vital, alive, and rich. They seemed to make so much sense. I got a glimmer of the distinction between wisdom and knowledge. As a scientist, I was consumed by knowledge. I did not recognize that wisdom and knowledge are separate entities. I thought the more knowledge I had, the wiser I was. I thought I knew *a lot*! I was blinded and denied myself access to what I couldn't see, but maybe felt.

Gradually, I got more involved with psychological things. I worked with professional people in the psychiatry department. I read some marginal people — R.D. Laing, Thomas Szasz. I was teaching accelerated medical students. The neurophysiological connection between brain and mind is a strong one, so I was reading philosophic-scientific stuff like Wittgenstein and others that essentially showed the circularity of life. It was a self-constructed view of the world with a flaw I couldn't see, namely that *it wasn't real*!

Commitments I'd made fell apart underneath me. I wasn't consciously searching for meaning. After all, I was in my thirties — I had my house in the suburbs — I'd made it — I wasn't a lost soul. But I did question like an adolescent. It was an intense period. I tried some drugs — but used them as a scientist, as a neuropharmacologist, like Aldous Huxley. I really lived the role of the scientist, and it had great meaning for me. Everything I did was to understand more.

Now, I don't actively function as a scientist. I would sooner call myself a philosopher, which is what I think a Sufi is.

Barbara: I'd call that period from one's early thirties up to some saturation point — a smorgasbord. You try many different viewpoints until you decide you've tried enough. At that point Allan and I began our acquaintance with the teachings of Meher Baba and Sufism. There's a saying that, when the pupil is ready, the Master appears.

Our smorgasbord period was ending early in 1973. We were invited to join a study-group of spiritual thought run by Dr Mackie of the Psychology Department at the University of Maryland. For us this was a period of integration. We were consolidating on a personal level, while on a deeper level certain things were becoming vital — forms of thought, positive feelings. A lot of questions were being answered and new questions generated. A year and a half later, we were introduced to the teachings of Meher Baba. His name seemed suddenly to crop up everywhere! We took a trip to England, and out of thousands of people we happened to ask directions from someone wearing a teeny little Meher Baba button. We were backpacking and had limited ourselves to three books — *The Discourses* of Meher Baba. We visited a spiritual community in Findhorn, Scotland, and found our roommates came from a family of Meher Baba followers. The message was becoming clear. The clues were there that this path might be right for us. Eventually we attended some seminars and, a few years later, we decided to take the candidates' class to become Sufis.

FIP: What about the *Discourses* intrigued you?

Barbara: The fact that they answered every meaningful question I could ask — and in a most satisfactory way. Absolutely all my questions were answered by the teachings of Meher Baba and Sufism.

Allan: I think the internal experiences for Barbara and me were very different. I had been questioning everything. As a scientist, I have a strong need to synthesize things — an aggressiveness about tying up loose ends. Reading Meher Baba — which is *not* easy — gives an inner sense that it is right. You'll have to accept that. It's a heap of faith.

On that trip to England, Barbara and I read those three books of his together. And Findhorn — that community Scotland — was very important to me. It felt substantial. We'd gone through the 'sixties and 'seventies, and we weren't kids . . . . Let me, by the way, say something more about drugs. Meher Baba gave guidance and integrity to many people decimated by drugs. He salvaged them. Many Sufis started this way. Not us. We simultaneously and spontaneously dropped drugs. You can't be a Sufi and take drugs. As Meher Baba said, "You can't find God in a pill."

Barbara: The candidates' class runs for ten weeks, during which you attend

class one evening a week. Meher Baba appointed a *Murshida* — Ivy Duce, who died last September — to lead the Sufi group we belong to. She, in turn, appointed a preceptor — Dr Mackie — who conducted the class.

Allan: There are many different groups of Sufis all around the world. Each is led by a teacher who is an advanced soul — a person who is wise and has a certain gift of understanding and enlightenment which he or she can share with a student. There are very few Sufis in the West. But the number is increasing, even though they are traditionally in the Middle East and Far East.

Barbara: Meher Baba, who died in 1969, decided at some point that it was important to his work to have this school called "Sufism Reoriented" and that students should be provided with an illuminated teacher called a *Murashid* — or *Murashida,* if a woman.

Allan: Inayat Khan, an Indian, led a Sufi group in America. He was probably the main disseminator of Sufism in the West. He was a musician who traveled around the world and had students in India, Europe, and America. He wrote prolifically. When he died, his successorship was handed down from one teacher to another — in his case, he left the cloak that symbolizes a teacher to a San Francisco woman named Ada Martin. When she died, she passed the cloak to Ivy Duce, our *Murashida.* Before she died, Ada Martin told Ivy Duce there was a "great soul" currently living. A great soul is one that is maximally evolved toward perfection or oneness with God.

Barbara: Sufis believe in a hierarchy of souls. There are many people with great wisdom — the world is never without wise people. Ivy Duce was told about the avatar who manifests himself at intervals of about 700 years. She went to see him and found Meher Baba. She was overwhelmed by meeting him.

FIP: If she was a Sufi leader, why didn't she already know about Meher Baba?

Allan: Spiritual people understand that there are always enlightened people around. The definition of who they are — that is, their names and the physical form they take — is often unknown. So we could meet a person and just sense that he's a very special being. There are many more spiritual students and many more paths than I know about. There are always other ways, other paths. A Sufi teaching is the metaphor of God as the ocean and each path is like one of many rivers that feed into it. There are probably almost as many paths as there are souls.

Barbara: Findhorn — in Scotland — was prophetic of the kind of community we have found here. That whole place was run with a sense of communication with God. They cared about doing everything they did in the most beautiful

(continued on page 62)

At a weekend Intensive
in New York State,
Swami Muktananda,
meditation, and Siddha Yoga . . . .

Finding A Guru

by DIANA JANI DRUCK

A COUPLE of months ago, if anyone had said that what I needed or wanted was a guru, I would have dismissed the idea as a mildly amusing joke. As it turned out, however, one weekend late in July, there I was, sitting cross-legged on a blue-carpeted floor with hundreds of people, listening intently to swamis in orange robes, singing songs, chanting, and meditating. All of us had come to this place for different reasons, but we all ended up there for the same purpose: to be in the company of Swami Muktananda, the Indian guru of Siddha Yoga. Being in the presence of this man, whether you call him a saint, a guru, a master, or a spiritual leader — and he is all of these, and far more — means your life will never again be quite the same. At least, this was what I had read. I was there to find out.

I had often thought meditation was something I needed. It made sense to me that to sit quietly, concentrating on a mantra or mandala and letting the rest of the world go by seemed to help people in many ways. Just setting aside the time every day, fitting into a busy schedule the practice of being calm and quiet for a while is evidence of the kind of self-discipline and self-awareness necessary for a productive, happy life. Unfortunately, I was never able to do it myself. Meditation was one of those things like health food and quitting smoking that I always felt I should be doing, yet I preferred to feel guilty and go on smoking and eating a lot of sugar than to exert the effort toward self-control.

I had tried meditation a few times, but I found that I was so self-conscious, so aware of what I was doing and trying to do, that I just couldn't let go of myself or of what was going on around me. I ended up feeling frustrated and upset. Why wasn't I achieving a calm, peaceful state by my efforts, which included counting slowly to ten, trying to picture each number clearly, or telling every part of my body to relax in turn? I would sit in the lotus position, knowing that people did that when they meditated, but having no idea why.

From the moment I began to read about Muktananda and Siddha Yoga, I felt drawn to him, drawn to the whole idea of meditation. It was the first time I had ever heard or read about meditation associated with God and with finding God. I felt intuitively that Muktananda would teach me something that would mean a lot to me.

Swami Muktananda is a Siddha, or perfected being, and he belongs to the long and ancient lineage of Siddha masters. This is his own definition of a Siddha guru, as told to a reporter in *In The Company of a Siddha:*

> "One who is perfect in everything is called a Siddha guru. A being who has attained independence from his inner senses as well as his outer senses is called a Siddha guru. Usually man is dependent on sensual gratification. He is dependent on touch, taste, words, or sounds, and form. He is also under the control of the six enemies: lust, anger, infatuation, greed, pride, and jealousy. He becomes a puppet and dances according to the mind's command. But a Siddha has learned to control all these things — the six enemies, all the senses, and the mind. He can do anything with them, and that's why he's called a Siddha, a perfected being. He holds or stores God's *Shakti* (spiritual energy) inside himself and is able to make other people realize this *Shakti* inside themselves. A Siddha is one who is not attracted to anything but to whom everything is attracted . . . ."

I felt the attraction almost from the first moment I heard about Swami Muktananda. For me, the attraction was not so much a mystical, far-out thing as a desire to learn something in which I was interested from someone who knew it inside and out, who had not only learned meditation, but had realized its highest and fullest potential. "Guru" means "teacher," and the relationship between guru and follower or disciple is basically that of teacher and student. What made it so hard for me to imagine myself as a follower of a guru, and what makes for western prejudices against gurus and mysticism, are the few but well-publicized cults that require followers to give up all the familiar and important aspects of their lives. Siddha Yoga struck me right from the beginning as very sensible and easy to live with because the point is stressed that one does not have to give up the world in order to be happy and attain spirituality. Muktananda also emphasized the fact that Siddha Yoga is compatible with all religions and there is no need to give up your religion in order to practice it.

I discovered that Swami Muktananda lived only three hours away from

me. He was residing until October in what had once been a resort hotel in the Catskills and is now called an ashram. An ashram is a community or place where spiritual discipline is practiced. Learning this, I felt that things were being made easy for me to visit this saint. Suddenly the search for a guru wasn't some far-out, life-shaking adventure that would require traveling to India or other extreme measures. Finding a guru could be done in the context of my ordinary life. When I decided to go up to New York State for an Intensive — a weekend meditation workshop — I didn't feel any of my usual nervousness about traveling to a strange place. I felt I would be at home there, with these people who were doing what I wanted to learn. I began to feel a sense of trust in whatever it would bring.

BEFORE I left for the Intensive, I familiarized myself with Muktananda and his teachings. I read five books and a few articles written by him or about him. *Meditate* is a short book which clearly and in conversational language defines Siddha meditation and how to meditate. It's an excellent introduction to Siddha Yoga and defines all the terms, such as *Shakti* and *Om Namah Shivaya*, that you need to know. *In The Company of a Siddha* offers a comprehensive introduction to the subject and practice of Siddha Yoga and meditation. It is comprised of interviews and conversations between Muktananda and religious leaders, psychologists, scientists, and reporters. In *Secrets of the Siddhas* Muktananda explains and clarifies the philosophies of the Siddha tradition and Kashmir Shivaism, an ancient Indian doctrine from which comes the concept of Shiva, a Hindu god, as the all-pervasive reality. *Reflections of the Self* is a collection of Muktananda's poetry. This is one of the poems from that collection:

Wear the armor of renunciation.
Brandish the saber of wisdom.
Wave the banner of Om, of faith.
Thus armed, begin your march
to conquer the abode of bliss.
With vigor, progress on the path.

Play of Consciousness is Muktananda's spiritual autobiography. In it he describes in detail the events leading up to his enlightenment. It describes the kind of experiences that had previously been part of the secret tradition of Siddha. I have to admit I found some of the experiences disturbing. Visions he had and the physical effects of *Shakti* were unlike anything I had ever associated with meditation. I was reading this particular book the night before I went to the ashram, and had a moment of apprehension — I felt I was about to enter a world very foreign to me. I was excited about exploring this new world, and being around people who were immersed in the kind of life I had always been attracted to. My feeling of anxiety didn't last. It was replaced by anticipation and a feeling that I was being pulled or drawn toward this place. From the start, it had seemingly been made easy for me to get there.

Reading his books, I discovered that Muktananda's message is actually

quite simple and straightforward:

> "Meditate on your Self, worship your Self, kneel to your Self, understand your Self; your God dwells within you as you. If you want to see God, you don't have to pursue God or follow any religion; just shower your compassion on people without any expectation, and then God will reveal Himself to you . . . ."

Part of the practice of meditation is the chanting or repetition of a mantra. According to Muktananda, only a true guru can give anyone a mantra, and only after he has fully realized that mantra himself and it has worked for him. Receiving a mantra from Muktananda is not the secret, mysterious act that some might think. He gives out the Sanskrit words *"Om Namah Shivaya"* as a mantra. These words are not just meaningless syllables: they mean "salutations to Shiva." Shiva is the word for the inner self, for the supreme reality. Meditating on *"Om Namah Shivaya"* is meditating on yourself and on the god that dwells within you.

THE PURPOSE of an Intensive is to initiate new people into the practice of Siddha Yoga. This is Swami Muktananda's definition of Siddha Yoga:

> "Siddha Yoga is a very great yoga; it is the king of all yogas. You have to practice other yogas for a very long time, and even then a seeker rarely becomes centered in the superconscious, or final state of experience. But in Siddha Yoga, when you get the grace of a Siddha guru who has received that grace from his master, the inner divinity, or divine power — called *Kundalini Shakti* — is awakened. This is called *Shaktipat* initiation. Once this power is awakened through grace, it automatically takes you to higher and higher levels of experience until you reach a state of equanimity. After you receive this touch from a master and the *Shakti* is awakened, everything happens automatically."

The *Shaktipat* initiation is why, though you can learn Siddha meditation up to a point from reading about it, the personal experience is the most important ingredient. Siddha Yoga revolves around the guru/follower relationship which involves personal contact between the two. That relationship, as well as the follower's own spiritual journey, is born out of the initiation, and initiation takes place through contact, whether it be by word, look, or touch. At the Intensives, Muktananda actually goes around and touches everyone to make sure initiation takes place.

When I got to the ashram, I was drawn inside by the strangely compelling music of chanting. I had never heard chanting before, and I didn't know how musical and beautiful it was. I walked into the building and followed the sound. I found myself at the door to a large blue-carpeted room, which was the meditation hall I had read about. It was filled with people sitting on the floor, which led down the front of the room in tiers, like a movie theater. Up high on the wall in front were the words *"Om Namah Shivaya."* Because I had been reading about those words and trying to meditate with them, I felt they lived in me already. The sight and sounds of that room filled me with the

desire to melt into it, to allow myself to be pulled in. I left reluctantly, since I wanted to register at the front desk before it closed for the night.

As I stood in line to register, I had the impression that everyone was very well dressed. There was little chitchat or small talk. I was to find that the self-absorption of meditation carries over into all aspects of life at the ashram. Life there is quiet, disciplined, free of unnecessary talk or movement. I found this disturbingly unfamiliar at first, but by the second day I had grown used to it and had become rather self-absorbed myself.

Other things about the way of life at the ashram I found uncomfortable at first. An Intensive weekend consists of about ten hours a day of sitting in the lotus position in the meditation hall and listening to Muktananda and the swamis, who are disciples who have taken vows of renunciation, hour-long meditation sessions, and breaks timed for just when you need them. There are literally thousands of people living together at the ashram, and you have to stand in line for almost everything, especially meals. I was sharing a room with six other women, which I found to be the hardest thing to get used to. Halfway through my first full day there, I had to take a walk during the lunch break to find a quiet place where I could just be alone to think and let it all sink in. After this, I felt much more at ease with the place. Everything was neat, clean, orderly, and well cared for. Even the grass of the lawn showed the care that was put into it: it was as even and smooth as the nap on a piece of green velvet.

One of my most vivid memories of the weekend is the food. Much time and care and effort are put into the meals, and as a result, they taste wonderful. During the afternoon, quite a number of people would be sitting at long tables in the cafeteria going through kernels of corn and beans, one by one, picking out the bad ones. The meals were vegetarian: hearty, healthy fare. Breakfast consisted of a peculiar porridge that seemed more like thick soup to me than a breakfast item, but it was a nice break from my usual bagel and coffee. For lunch there was fruit salad made from fruit given to Muktananda in offering.

Offerings are made to Muktananda each morning in a *darshan*, which is a kind of reception line. Everyone waits to greet the guru and offer him fruit, flowers, anything. This is an ancient Indian tradition: when one visits a saint, one does not go empty-handed. An interesting aspect of the practice is that people give Muktananda cigarets or liquor or symbols of other addictions or habits they want to give up. He is supposed to be able to take on their addictions and cure them. I almost wished I hadn't quit smoking some months earlier, so I could see if it worked.

I think my favorite aspect of life at the ashram was the chanting. The sound was heard constantly during waking hours. When there was chanting in the meditation hall, it was piped throughout the building, and when there wasn't any, tapes were played. During the Intensive program we chanted *"Om Namah Shivaya"* several times a day. Not only was it extraordinarily beautiful to me, I felt its power too.

At first the chanting sounded strange and foreign: musical though com-

posed of unfamiliar rhythms. Also, I felt rather shy about sitting on the floor and chanting. But I got caught up in it very quickly. As more and more people joined in the chant, it filled the room and became a kind of energy, swelling up and out until it filled everyone. The energy began to pull clear, pure sounds out of me almost without effort on my part. I pictured the sound as a vivid blue line of color and light vibrating in the warm darkness. I heard it as one note composed of many voices. I felt connected with all the people in the room — connected by the energy the chant generated. The music of the chant seemed to be the purest expression of human joy there could be. I merged with it. It was through this experience that I finally understood what people mean when they talk about becoming one with the universe or cosmos.

During the meditation sessions, the feelings of community, joy, and excitement went on. It was during the second meditation that I received the touch of Muktananda. As he moved nearer and nearer, great anticipation filled me and made my heart beat fast and hard. When he was one or two people away, my hands, resting palms-up on my knees, began to feel a powerful electric force in the air, but it was as if they felt this from the inside, as if something in me was coming into electric contact with something coming from Muktananda. Unable to move, I waited in fear, dread, and excitement. Muktananda put his hand on top of my head and threw it back. Then his knuckles were in the corners of my closed eyes, digging in hard — but I felt no pain. It was over in a second. I just sat there, stunned. For a minute or two, I felt nothing. Then suddenly I was completely overtaken by a wave of pure joy. I found myself transported to a realm of love and blue light. I felt that I was the light of joy inside and out. For about half an hour, I sat there, laughing and crying with all my soul at the beauty and rapture. I felt such love for the whole world. I saw that I could wrap myself and the blue light of love and joy over the whole of it.

The next day, in the meditation session, I had a vision of my inner self. I saw the kundalini energy come alive inside. All morning I had been feeling energy and a strange sensation at the top of my head, which is where one of the spiritual centers of the body is located. The inner self is supposed to be located there, in the form of the tiny blue light, which Muktananda calls "the blue pearl." It is a goal of Siddha meditation to reach and see the inner self in this form. Muktananda touched me on top of my head again that second day, and when he did, I saw a flash of the blue light that seemed to be between my eyebrows. After a few minutes, I felt I was being pulled up by that place on my head. On top of my head there seemed to be a lotus of many petals lit up in blue luminescence. Whether my eyes were open or closed, I saw blue in the darkness everywhere. I was being pulled up by the lotus so that my spine was very straight, and soon I saw a column of blue light going from the base of my spine, which is the seat of the dormant kundalini energy, to the blue lotus on top of my head. The blue column was energy — pure energy: it was the kundalini rising through my body. After about twenty minutes, the pull subsided a little, and I had another vision. I saw my body being buried under a mountain of brown earth falling like an avalanche on top of me. No sooner

had my body disappeared under the dirt than a blue column of light topped by a blue luminescent lotus sprang from the ground in its place. It seemed to tell me I would be able to leap free from the limitations of my body.

After seeing all this, I sat there, feeling that no matter what was going on outside of me, there would be this inner self represented by the blue column of light and energy that would always be there. I began to understand that when I come into contact with people, I interact with that part of myself, too, because that really *is* myself. I saw that in order to affect people in a positive way, to meet other people with compassion and love, I would have to keep my own spiritual energy clear and pure by meditation.

How has the grace of a saint affected my life? I ask myself this from time to time. I have not been able to maintain a firm and disciplined schedule of meditation, as I had hoped. There have been no miracles. But people tell me that I seem calmer, happier. I have a new trust in myself and in the energy that powers my life. That energy I call God sometimes — sometimes I see it in myself as blue light spreading inside me and reaching out to the people I love. And sometimes it occurs to me that my job is going very well, and that I am finally doing a lot of things I always wanted to do, like getting paid for writing, and I am surrounded by wonderful people who are my friends. The changes in my life are the results of my own efforts and energies, and meditation and Siddha Yoga are helping me to clarify and direct them. It is perfectly natural to me.

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BOOK REVIEW

A New-Age Directory

PEOPLE have been saying for a long time that we are in a new age — an age of spiritual awakening and rediscovery. Partly as a result of the upheavals of fifteen or so years ago, Americans, particularly the young, seem more and more to be turning their attention to some of the larger issues and questions that come up in human experience. We are more and more becoming seekers, seekers of answers to ancient questions of ways of living with the world we find ourselves in, seekers of information on how people of other cultures live their lives and face the same problems we do.

With increasing interest in matters spiritual comes, of course, an increase in the amount of literature written about them. Publications available these days range from how-to manuals, directories, writings of and about spiritual and religious leaders, reports from travelers into unfamiliar worlds. *A Pilgrim's Guide To Planet Earth: A traveler's handbook and new-age directory*, just out, combines all of these categories in one useful, interesting, and nicely laid-out package.

As the title announces, *A Pilgrim's Guide* is written for seekers who are interested in exploring the entire world. It also makes fascinating reading for those of us who would rather do our exploring from armchairs, because it does much more than list points of interest:

"*A Pilgrim's Guide* is both a travel guide and international directory. But its essence is beyond this. Its purpose is to raise our consciousness toward Planet Earth. It is to present access to the sacred places of earth — natural, ancient, and modern — and to the people who reside there. These sites, as focal points for energy and consciousness, are important to the people and to the planet itself. Many traditional peoples, such as the Hopis, believe that loss and destruction of their sacred spots will bring suffering to humanity. There is much truth in this."

The guide is arranged by country. Each country has its own listing, which includes lists of spiritual centers and organizations, restaurants, foodstores, hotels, bookstores, publications, celebrations and, of course, historical and sacred sites. Each country's section includes historical information about that country and interesting facts about traditions and culture. Also included are suggestions on how best to appreciate the uniqueness of each country. *A Pilgrim's Guide* does not focus on any one faith, and even has a section in the front entitled "Planet Earth Religions," which provides short summaries of all religions from Hinduism to Shamanism. Also in the front of the book, before the listings, are basic travel hints, commentaries

from various authors on such subjects as sacred art and the power points of the earth and the useful "Pilgrim's protocol." Sprinkled throughout are photographs and drawings appropriate to the pages they are on.

Present throughout the book is the idea that, though pilgrimages and travel can help us on the road to enlightenment, God exists inside of us and can't be found by merely looking at the right structure or attending the right service in the right country after an appropriate amount of travel. The point of such advice as is contained in "Pilgrim's protocol" is that in order to appreciate and learn from other peoples' cultures and faiths we must respect them and show our respect. Each country has its own unique flavor, and we have to keep ourselves open and observant if we are to taste it.

Two of the longest listings are for England and India. It is interesting to compare them as examples of Western religion and Eastern spirituality. England apparently has some of the earth's most powerful energy centers. Religious traditions there are first pagan, then Christian. Many of the Christian structures were built on sites sacred to pagan religions. The country is crossed by a web of sacred or religious structures and sites that are aligned perfectly with each other and the magnetic currents of the earth. The lines are called "ley" lines. Glastonbury is one of the places where the earth's energy is very high. King Arthur is supposed to have lived there, and the Holy Grail is thought to be buried there. What can be seen there now is a pattern of hedges, roads, and woods laid out to form a ring of the twelve signs of the Zodiac in the Age of Taurus. The Glastonbury Zodiac, a mind-boggling example of ancient human creativity, measures ten miles across and can be seen totally only from the air! A more familiar example is Stonehenge — huge, monolithic stones placed in a spiral pattern. Many theories exist about Stonehenge. Field thinks the stones were placed in such a way as to help harmonize the natural energies of the earth. Astronomer Gerald Hawkins believes they served as a sophisticated astronomical observatory from which eclipses could be predicted.

The description of India offers insights into the character of that country from which comes so much of the spirituality of the East. The editor suggests one must be able to surrender to the way of life in India in order to reap its rewards:

"The man dying in the street must be looked at, must be felt deep inside, if one is to be nourished by the Mother (India). Become quiet enough to feel the pulse that the dying man is part of. Will the water of the Ganges give you dysentery or will it cleanse your soul? Feel the pulse. Become one with it. Stay a long time in one place, go deep into the movements of the Mother's dance."

Because the culture and religion of India are so intertwined, to go to India is to surround oneself with spirituality. *A Pilgrim's Guide* gives some practical advice for the seeker on taking advantage of the hospitality of Indian householders, how to avoid the extremes of the hot and the rainy seasons, how to visit a guru.

A Pilgrim's Guide is certainly worth reading, even if you have no intention of embarking on a pilgrimage of your own. —D.J.D.

Sufism Reoriented *(Continued from page 51)*

way. They were interested in beauty for its own sake because beauty is a reflection of God and the teachings of perfection.

That's the way things are here at the Sufi Center. By participating in all that goes on, you quickly learn that everything is a reflection. You want to enhance it, feed it, take care of it so that it reflects the maximum amount of light.

And it's not easy. This is not a way *out.* It's much more a way in. And it's really hard work! What happens is that your mind and consciousness become expanded. You have a much broader understanding of what might be a more perfect way so it's not easy to deceive yourself. We've been taught that it's not *supposed* to be easy — that challenges are part of your personal growth. It's your job to interpret all that you're taught the best way you can so that you can move on in your learning and also automatically make things better for everyone and everything around. Everything matters, so you can't say "So what?" or "Who cares?"

And you're not supposed to believe that if you follow this recipe for living, tomorrow everything will be perfect. It's supposed to be grueling when it's grueling. Your job is to make it less difficult or to rise above it. And you shouldn't expect to come out one hundred per cent. That's far in the future. It takes lots of work and many lifetimes, and your goal as a Sufi is to inch your way up in the best way you can.

Allan: Baba's teachings contain definite principles — things like "desirelessness," to be free of cravings.

Barbara: A very strong principle is that one's ego stands in the way between oneself and higher knowing. Dissolving these barriers brings you closer to perfection or God. This is painful, since the ego is a cushion protecting and affirming you.

Allan: The spiritual path is tricky. One of Baba's teachings is that the path one takes to God is a *long* path. This concept of being on a path is helpful.

FIP: So there's a direction being given to your life irrespective of anything you do about it?

Allan: I suspect the way Baba would teach that is that it has to do with the laws of karma. These laws involve an understanding that each life we lead is an opportunity to learn more about God — about reality. Along the way of each life, we set the stage for the next life. So reincarnation becomes a sort of essential teaching. There are no accidents in that sense of the word.

Sufism is to be in the world but not of it.

FIP: Can you be a Sufi and be a scientist like you used to be?

Allan: Absolutely. Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage." That's what Sufism is involved with. The world is God's stage. We're a bunch of people

with real limitations to knowing. We're cast in certain parts, and it's our job to play the parts to the hilt. It's like a great repertory theater. The better we play our parts, the more we learn. It doesn't matter if we play greater or lesser parts. It's *the learning* that is important . . . . *What we're trying to do is learn to act properly.*

FIP: Does Meher Baba teach something like a Golden Rule?

Allan: There's this prayer: "To penetrate into the essence of all being and significance and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing, in the world of forms, truth, love, purity, and beauty — this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents, and attainments can, in themselves, have no lasting importance."

Barbara: Prayer is almost synonymous with thankfulness.

Allan: I also see prayer as a way of getting *around* or *through* myself. I want to go forward, and my selfishness stands in the way. I flail and I fail and I see the futility. So I stop flailing and just say, "Please." Prayer also sensitizes me to people and to things.

I have not had a vision of Baba. But I've experienced exalted moods. Last night I saw the moon and stars up in the heavens from my attic window. I had this cosmic experience. It was like triggered memories of the past, feeling the expansiveness of the heavens and the ocean. It was nothing concrete. Just a wonderful feeling of internal expansiveness.

Barbara: I've had that experience here at the Center. Here people are freed up to use their highest knowing in a way that might not be easy for them when they're at home cooking and the kids are in the room and the TV's on. Here people are free to give you what they'd like to give. Everybody's working together, crossing bridges, moving obstacles out of the way more easily than seems possible — it's almost as if it's only with God's help that we can do this. It's magic. A miracle!

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MEDITATION

HE. — I can secure my happiness by vices which are natural to me, which I have acquired without labor, which I preserve without effort, which go well with the manners of my nation, which are to the taste of those who protect me, and are more in harmony with their small private necessities, than virtues which would weary them by being a standing accusation against them from morning to night, why, it would be very singular for me to go and torment myself like a lost spirit, for the sake of making myself into somebody other than I am, to put on a character foreign to my own, and qualities which I will admit to be highly estimable, in order to avoid discussion, but which it would cost me a great deal to acquire, and a great deal to practice, and would lead to nothing, or possibly to worse than nothing, through the continual satire of the rich among whom beggars like me have to seek their subsistence.

We praise virtue, but we hate it, and shun it, and know very well that it freezes the marrow of our bones — and in this world one must have one's feet warm. And then all that would infallibly fill me with ill-humor; for why do we so constantly see religious people so harsh, so querulous, so unsociable? 'Tis because they have imposed a task upon themselves which is not natural to them. They suffer, and when people suffer, they make others suffer too. That is not my game, nor that of my protectors either; I have to be happy, supple, amusing, comical. Virtue makes itself respected, and respect is inconvenient; virtue insists on being admired, and admiration is not amusing. I have to do with people who are bored, and I must make them laugh. Now it is absurdity and madness which make people laugh, so mad and absurd I must be; and even if nature had not made me so, the simplest plan would still be to feign it. Happily, I have no need to play hypocrite; there are so many already of all colors, without reckoning those who play hypocrite with themselves . . . . If your friend Rameau were to apply himself to show his contempt for fortune, and women, and good cheer, and idleness, and to begin to Catonize, what would he be but a hypocrite? Rameau must be what he is — a lucky rascal among rascals swollen with riches, and not a mighty paragon of virtue, or even a virtuous man, eating his dry crust of bread, either alone, or by the side of a pack of beggars. And to cut it short, I do not get on with your felicity, or with the happiness of a few visionaries like yourself.

I. — I see, my friend, that you do not even know what it is, and that you are not even made to understand it.

HE. — So much the better, I declare; so much the better. It would make me burst with hunger and weariness, and maybe, with remorse.

— DIDEROT : Rameau's Nephew

The opinions expressed in this issue are the authors' and not necessarily those of the editors or of Fellowship in Prayer.

Suggested BOOKS

Following are some of the books which have been used in the preparation of this issue:

HANUKKAH: THE FEAST OF LIGHTS by Emily Solis-Cohen Jr. The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1973.

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT: etched by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1972.

THE EYE OF SHIVA: EASTERN MYSTICISM AND SCIENCE by Amaury de Riencourt. William Morrow, New York, 1981.

PENSEES DE PASCAL: edited by Victor Rocher. Alfred Mame et Fils, Tours, France, 1873.

PASCAL'S ANGUISH AND JOY: by Charles S. MacKenzie. Philosophical Library, New York, 1973.

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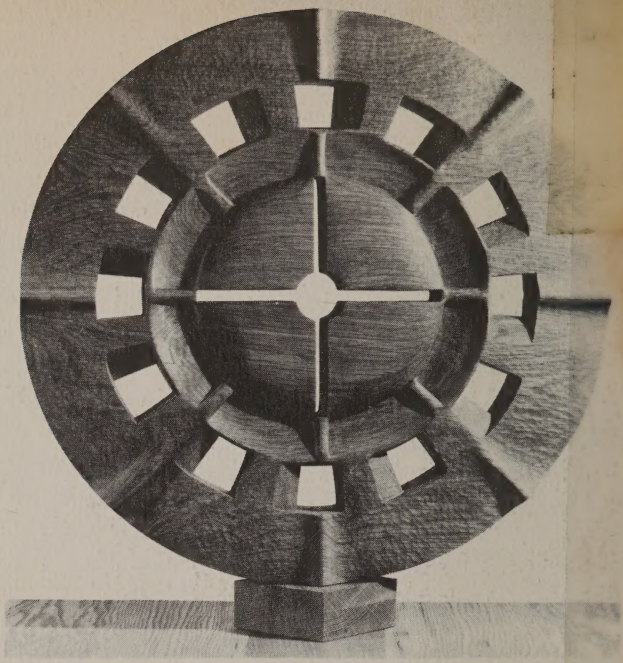
Oak sculpture
by JANE McCLINTOCK



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